

# SHRIDATTA



The *Kathasaritsagara* (The ocean of stories) of Somadeva is really an abridged version of that great treasure—the *Brihatkatha*. No version of the *Brihatkatha* has come to us, though we have many poems and plays in Sanskrit which draw on it for themes. The *Kathasaritsagara*, however, preserves, though in a very terse form, this great heritage. It abounds in tales of romance and adventure in wondrous worlds up in the sky, or in the bowels of the earth, or on the bed of the ocean, peopled by persons and semi-divine beings who deal in magic as an everyday commodity.

The story of Shridatta (a gift of Shri, that is Lakshmi) is adapted from one such tale. Shridatta is a universal favourite as one would expect a gift from the Goddess Lakshmi to be.



\* Paper used for the printing of this book was made available by the Government of India at concessional rates.\*

Printed by H. K. Nasa at IBH Printers, Marol Naka, Pachuradi Vastanji Road, Andheri East, Bombay 59. Published by H. G. Mirchandani, trustee, IBH Education Trust, Ravi Mansion, 2nd Floor, 29, Wodehouse Road, Bombay 400 039.

Editor: Anant Pai      Retold by: Lakshmi Beshadri      Artwork: V. B. Halbe

# SHRIDATTA



KALANEMI AND HIS WIFE LIVED IN THE CITY OF PATALIPUTRA.  
THEY WERE VERY POOR. THEY HAD NO CHILDREN.

EVERYBODY SEEMS  
TO HAVE LOTS  
OF MONEY TO  
SPEND.

AND  
CHILDREN  
TO LOVE.

LET'S PRAY TO  
SHRIDEVI TO GIVE  
US CHILDREN  
AND MONEY.

A GOOD  
IDEA!

SO THEY PERFORMED A SACRIFICE TO SHRIDEVI, THE GODDESS OF WEALTH.





THE GODDESS APPEARED BEFORE THEM.

I AM PLEASED  
WITH YOU. YOUR  
DESIRES SHALL  
BE FULFILLED.



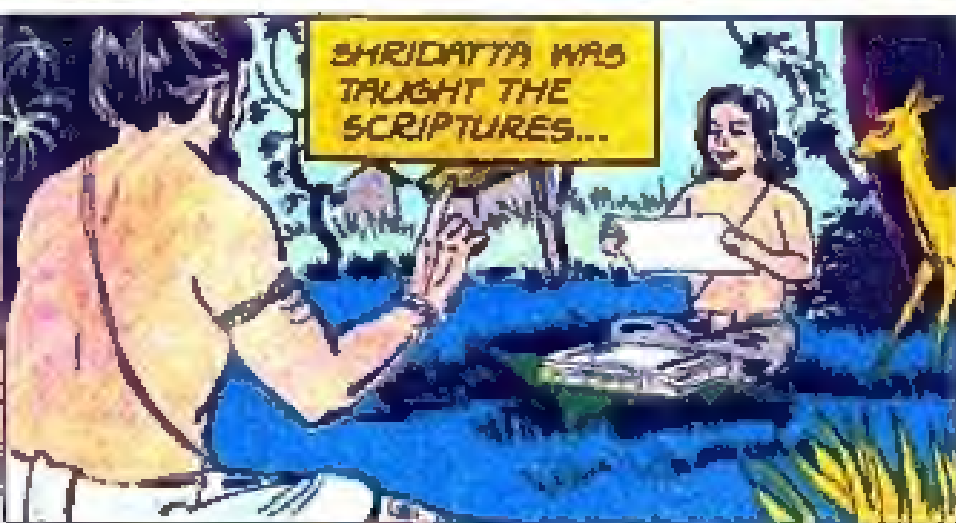
SOON, A SON WAS BORN TO THEM.

ISN'T HE A FINE  
BABY?



LET US CALL HIM SHRIDATTA  
AS HE IS A GIFT OF  
SHRIDEVI.





HE GREW UP AS GOOD AS HE WAS TALENTED.



THE KING OF PATALIPUTRA HEARD OF SHRIDATTA. KALANEMI AND SHRIDATTA WERE INVITED TO THE COURT.



THE KING SOON BECAME VERY FOND OF SHRIDATTA.





SHRIDATTA MADE MANY FRIENDS AT COURT—

I WISH SHRIDATTA  
WERE OUR  
PRINCE.

HE IS AS  
COURTEOUS AS  
VIKRAMASHAKTI  
IS RUDE.

I WOULD GIVE  
MY LIFE FOR  
SHRIDATTA.

ALL THIS MADE  
VIKRAMASHAKTI  
JEALOUS OF  
SHRIDATTA.

ONE OF THESE  
DAYS I'LL GET  
EVEN WITH  
HIM.

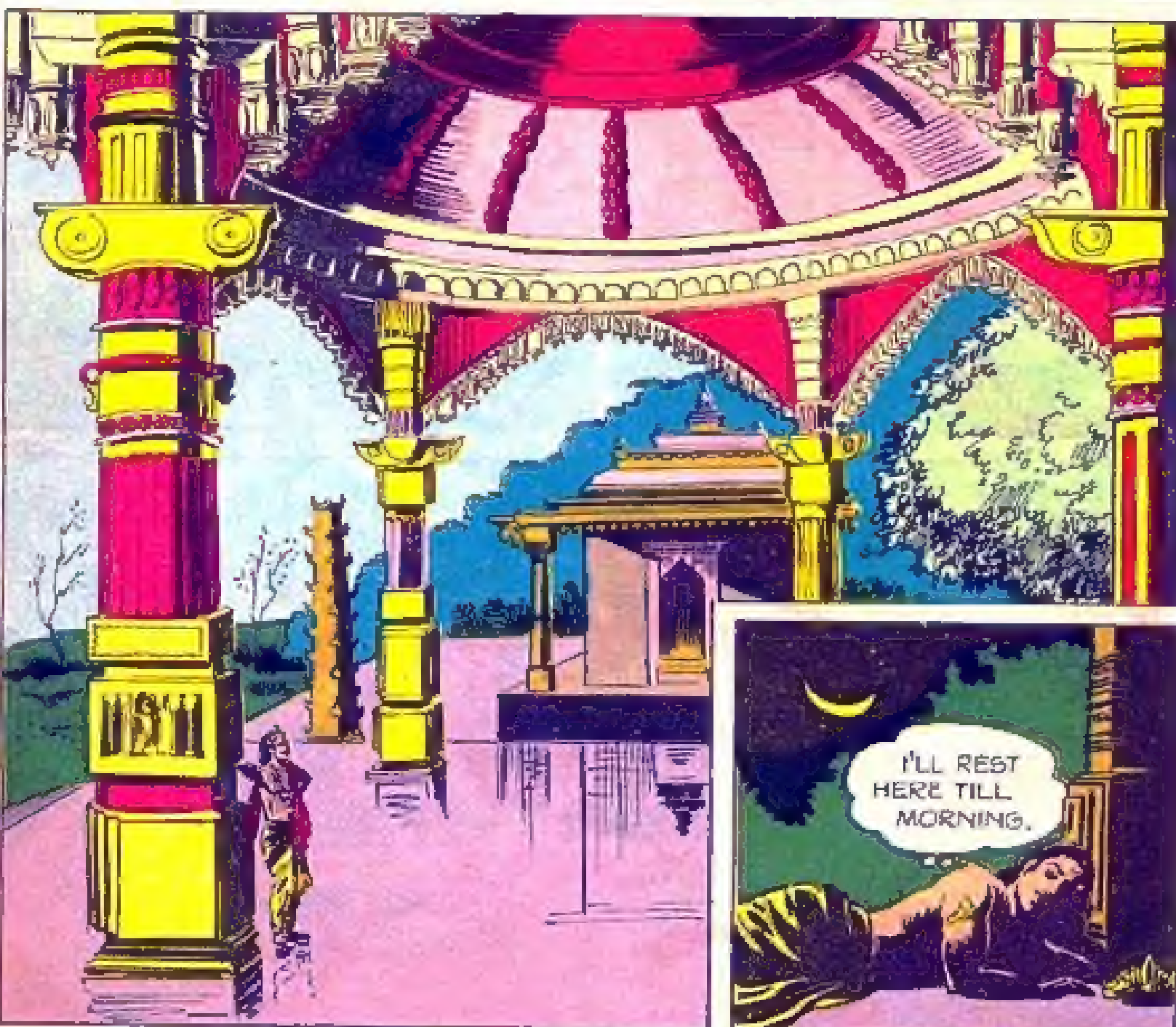
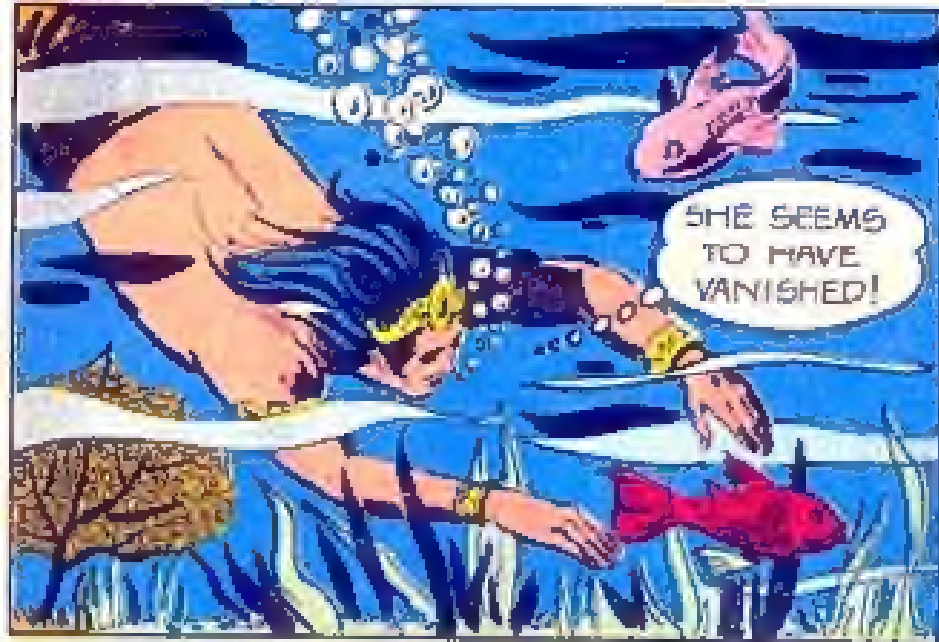
A FEW DAYS LATER SHRIDATTA AND HIS  
FRIENDS WERE NEAR THE RIVER GANGA. SUDDENLY—

HELP!  
HELP!

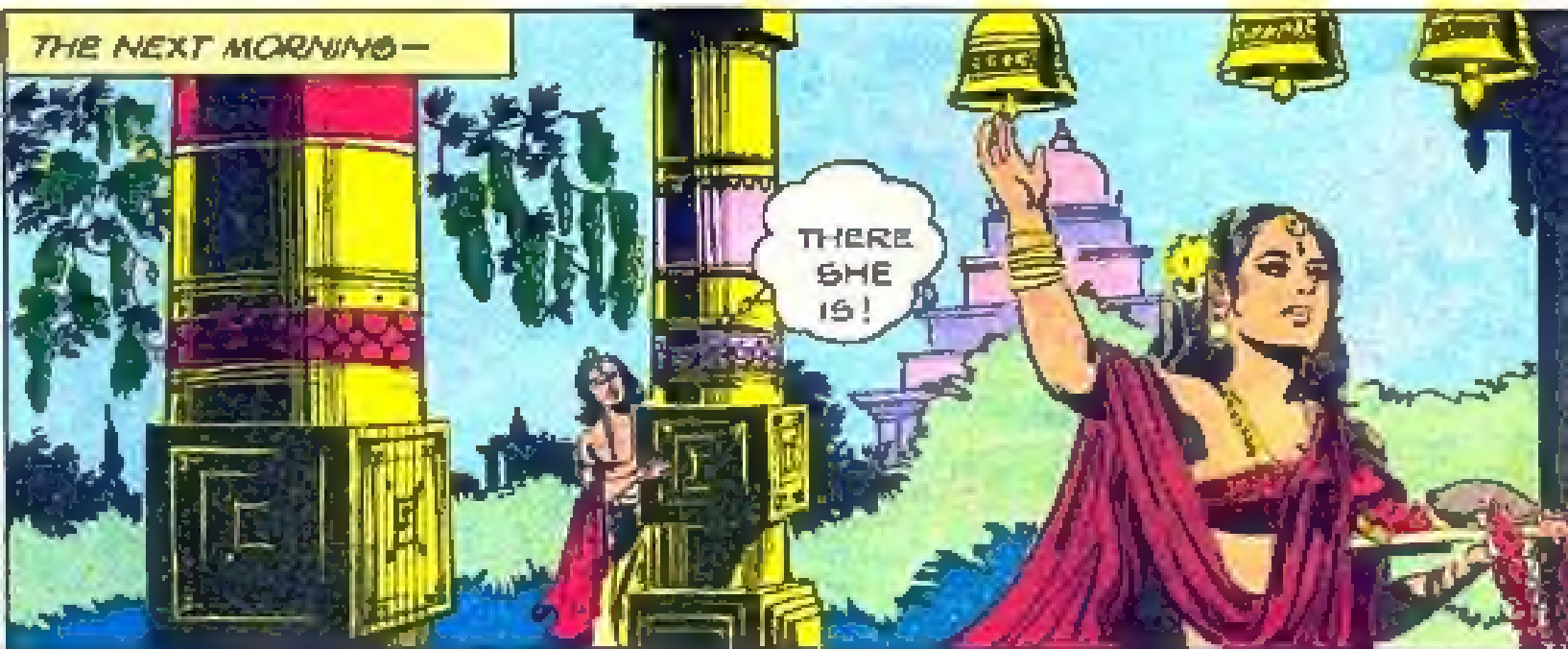
I MUST  
HELP  
HER.

TAKE CARE,  
SHRIDATTA.  
WE'LL WAIT TILL  
YOU COME BACK.





THE NEXT MORNING—



INSIDE, A STRANGE SIGHT MET HIS EYES.



I AM AN ASURA PRINCESS -  
THE GRANDDAUGHTER OF  
THE MIGHTY BAL.



"WHEN LORD VISHNU DEFEATED  
MY GRANDFATHER, BY  
STEPPING ON HIS HEAD. ."



"HE DROVE US  
OUT OF TRIPURA"



"A LION GUARDS THE GATE  
TO OUR CITY"

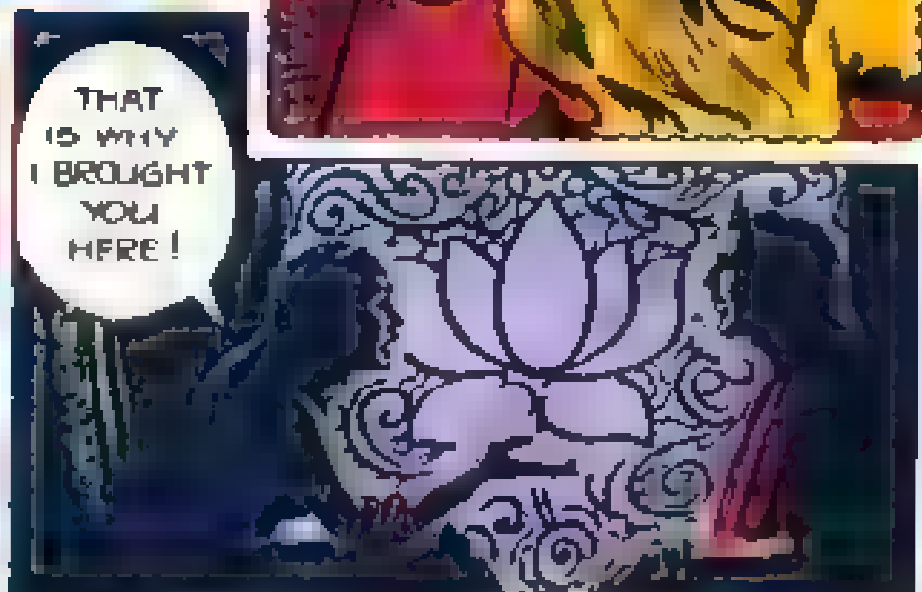


THAT LION CAN BE  
KILLED ONLY BY  
A STRONG  
HUMAN  
BEING



PLEASE  
LET ME  
TRY.

THAT  
IS WHY  
I BROUGHT  
YOU  
HERE!





THE VERY NEXT DAY SHRIDATTA  
FOUGHT THE LION.

GRRRR

THAT  
SHOULD KILL  
HIM.

TO HIS SURPRISE THE LION TURNED  
INTO A YAKSHA.

I AM GRATEFUL TO  
YOU, SHRIDATTA.  
YOU HAVE RELEASED  
ME FROM A CURSE.



THIS SWORD  
IS CALLED  
MRIGANKAKA.  
TAKE IT.

WITH IT, YOU  
WILL ALWAYS  
WIN.

\*YAKSHAS ARE SEMI-DIVINE BEINGS, OF WHOM KUBERA WAS THE LORD.

THEN IT WAS THE TURN OF THE ASURA PRINCESS TO EXPRESS HER GRATITUDE



MEANWHILE —

SHRIDATTA HAS BEEN AWAY FOR SO LONG! WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED TO HIM?

HE MAY BE IN DANGER, OR EVEN DEAD.

JUST THEN A VOICE WAS HEARD.

SHRIDATTA IS ALIVE! HE WILL SOON BE WITH YOU.

ANXIOUS TO GIVE SHRIDATTA'S PARENTS THE GOOD NEWS, THEY RUSHED TOWARDS THE CITY. BUT ON THEIR WAY THEY WERE STOPPED BY FRIENDS.

GO TO LWAIN I'LL HIDE NEAR THE RIVER AND BRING SHRIDATTA TO YOU

DON'T GO TO PATALIPUTRA. THE KING DIED YESTERDAY. VIKRAMASHAKTI HAS KILLED SHRIDATTA'S PARENTS AND IS NOW LOOKING FOR YOU.



WHEN SHRIDATTA CAME OUT OF THE GANGA -

WHERE ARE THE OTHERS?

SHH! COME QUIETLY INTO THE WOODS AND I'LL TELL YOU IT'S A LONG STORY

SHRIDATTA WAS HORRIFIED WHEN HE HEARD THE NEWS.

I'LL AVENGE MY PARENTS WITH MRIGANKAKA, MY DIVINE SWORD.

LET'S FIRST GO TO LJWAIN WHERE THE OTHERS ARE WAITING

AT LJWAIN -

YOU ARE ALWAYS MOODY, SHRIDATTA

I HAVE REASON ENOUGH. MY PARENTS HAVE BEEN KILLED AND I HAVE NOT YET AVENGED THEIR MURDER.

LET'S GO TO THE FAIR. IT WILL CHEER YOU UP.

AT THE FAIR—

WHO IS THAT  
LOVELY GIRL?

SHE IS PRINCESS  
MRIGANKAVATI, THE  
ONLY CHILD  
OF OUR  
KING.

HE WANTS HER TO  
MARRY A RICH AND  
POWERFUL PRINCE  
ONE FIT TO BECOME  
HIS HEIR.

SUDDENLY —

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

THE PRINCESS HAS BEEN  
BITTEN BY A SNAKE.

THE PRINCESS WAS  
CARRIED AWAY TO A  
HUT NEAR BY

I CAN  
SAVE HER  
LIFE

WHAT ARE  
WE WAITING  
FOR THEN?

THE  
VIR  
SHE  
IS NO

THEY HURRIED TO THE HUT WHERE THE PRINCESS WAS LAID OUT.

ALAS! MY MISTRESS  
IS COLD AND  
STILL

LET ME IN! I CAN  
REVIVE  
HER

MAKE WAY  
FOR HIM.

LET ME PUT THIS  
MAGIC  
RING ON  
HER  
FINGER.

WHO IS HE?

THERE IS NO HOPE  
BUT LET HIM TRY

AS SHRIDDATTA PUT THE RING ON HER FINGER THE PRINCESS SLOWLY  
REGAINED  
CONSCIOUSNESS.

WHAT IS THE MATTER?  
WHO IS THIS  
STRANGER?

HE SAVED  
YOUR LIFE. YOU  
WERE BITTEN  
BY A SNAKE.



SHRIDATTA AND  
THE PRINCESS  
GAZED LONG  
AT EACH OTHER

MY SAVIOUR!  
I OWE MY  
LIFE TO YOU.

HOW BEAUTIFUL  
SHE IS! I WISH  
SHE WERE MINE

JUST THEN THE KING ENTERED.

WHAT IS HAPPENING  
HERE? HOW IS  
MRIGANKAVATI?

I'M ALL  
RIGHT NOW,  
FATHER.

SHE WAS BITTEN BY  
A SNAKE. THIS  
MAN HAS JUST  
REVIVED HER.

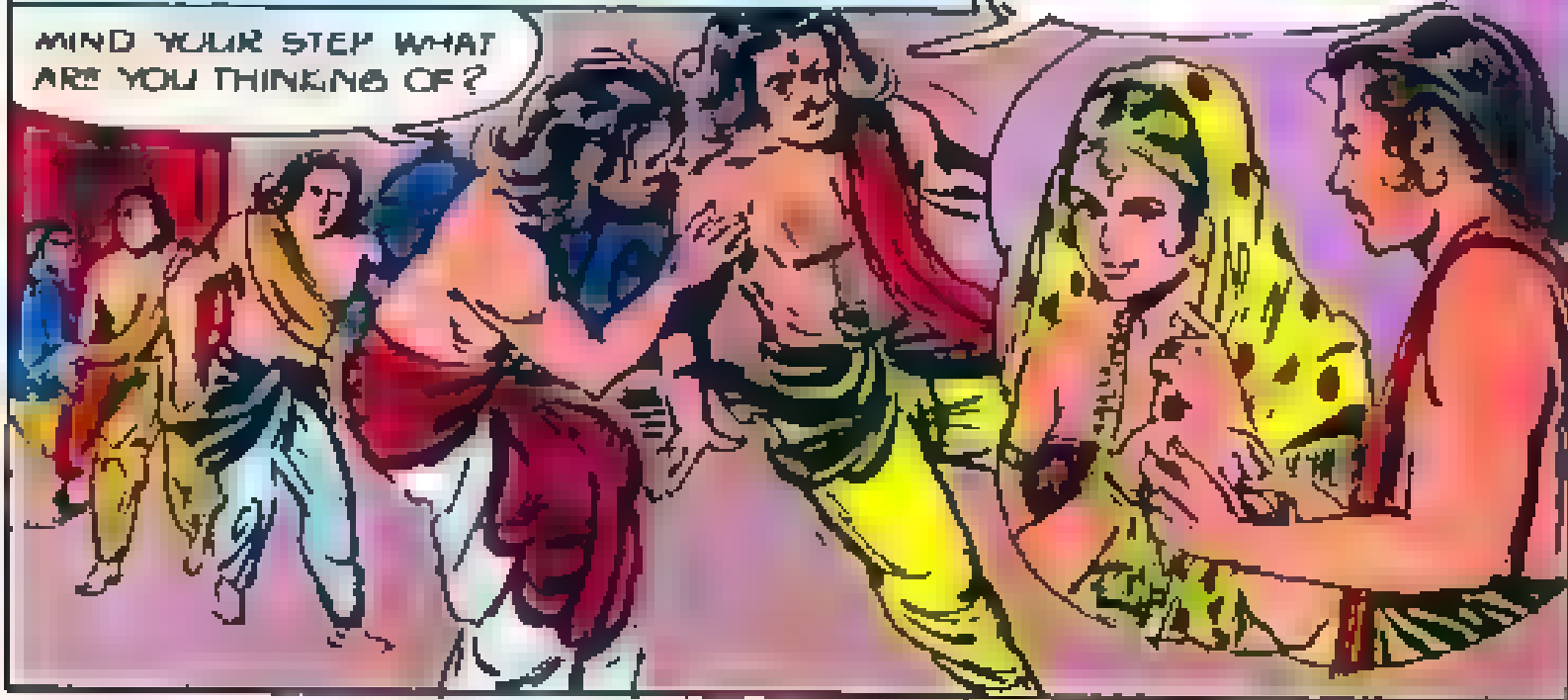
I'LL SEE THAT YOU ARE  
PROPERLY REWARDED,  
MY SON!

I DON'T WANT A  
REWARD. I AM  
GLAD I WAS  
THERE IN TIME.

AS SHRIDATTA AND HIS FRIENDS WALKED AWAY-

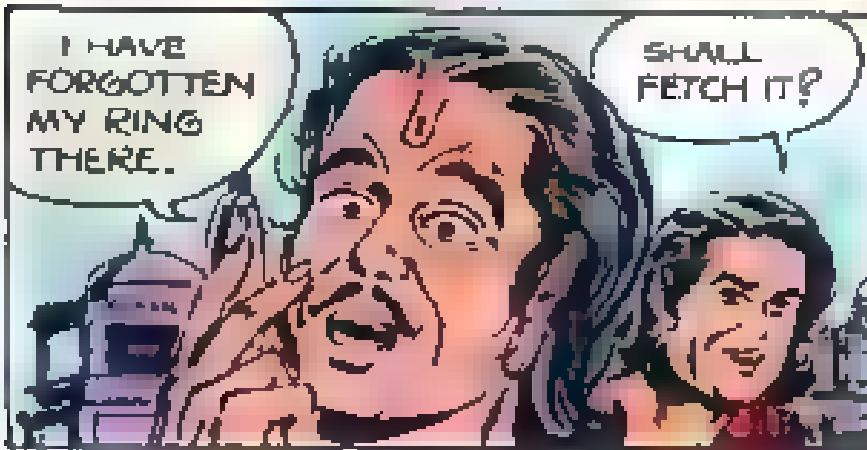
I JUST REMEMBERED.

MIND YOUR STEP WHAT  
ARE YOU THINKING OF?



I HAVE  
FORGOTTEN  
MY RING  
THERE.

SHALL  
FETCH IT?



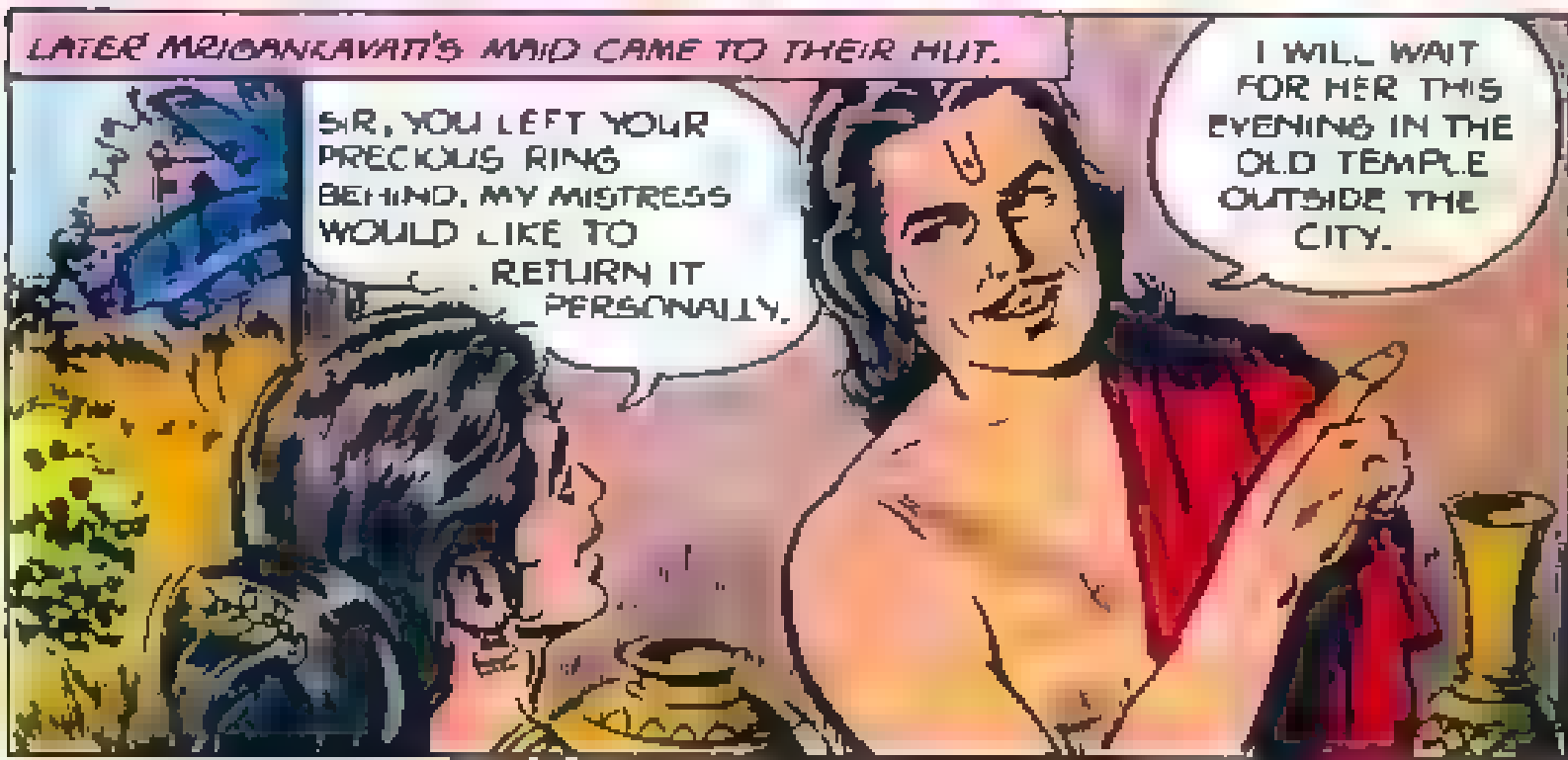
DON'T. IT WILL GIVE  
SHRIDATTA AN EXCUSE  
TO MEET HER AGAIN



LATER MRIGANKAVATI'S MAID CAME TO THEIR HUT.

SIR, YOU LEFT YOUR  
PRECIOUS RING  
BEHIND. MY MISTRESS  
WOULD LIKE TO  
RETURN IT  
PERSONALLY.

I WILL WAIT  
FOR HER THIS  
EVENING IN THE  
OLD TEMPLE  
OUTSIDE THE  
CITY.



THAT EVENING WHEN THEY MET -

I LOVE YOU,  
MRIGANKAVATI  
WILL YOU  
MARRY ME?

MY FATHER WILL  
NEVER AGREE .HE  
WANTS ME TO  
MARRY A RICH  
AND POWERFUL  
PRINCE

THEN COME  
AWAY  
WITH ME.

I CAN'T  
LIVE  
WITHOUT  
YOU.

I WILL.

THAT NIGHT -

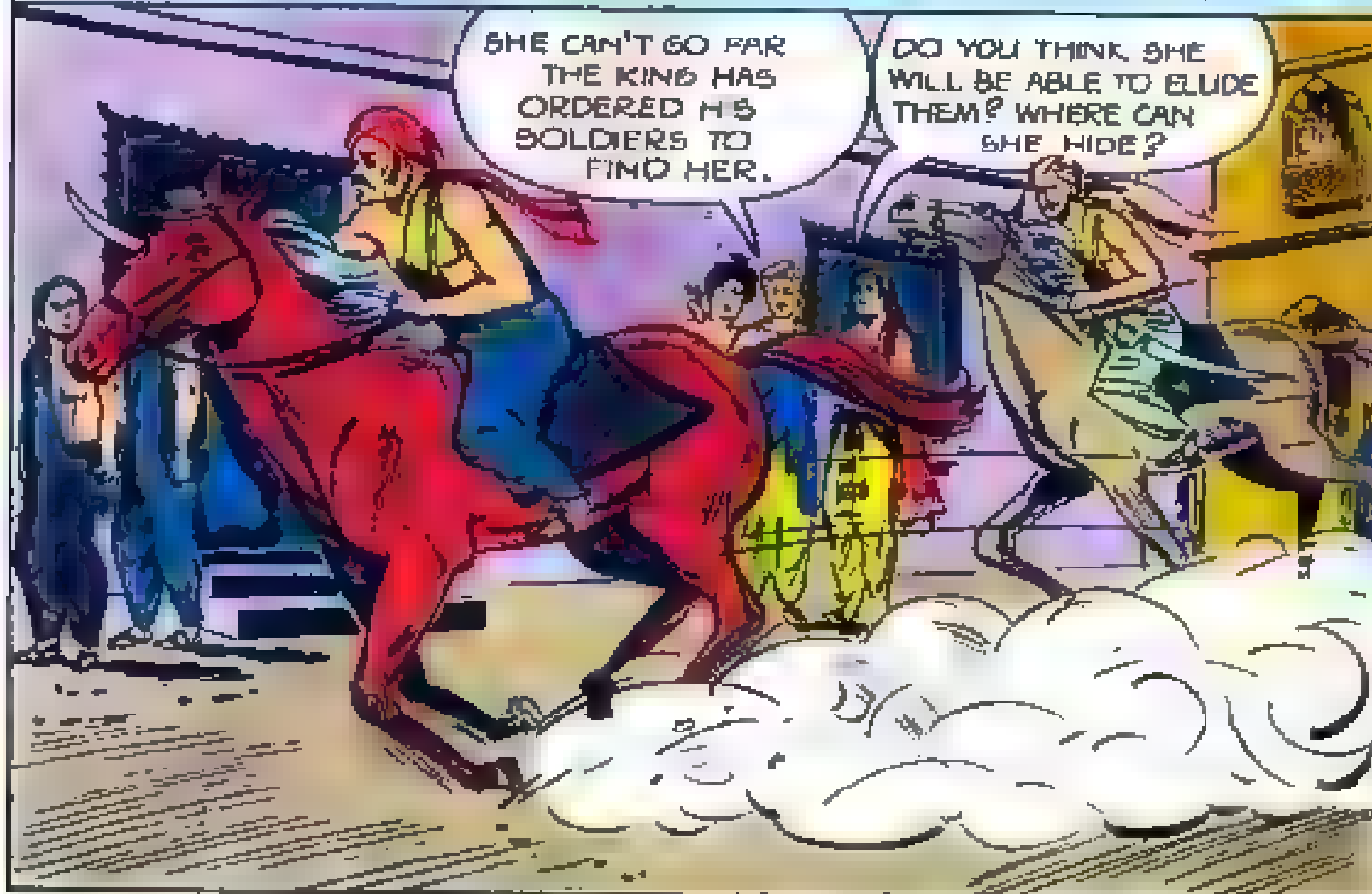
SHRIDATTA, YOU MUST BE  
SEEN IN THE CITY TOMORROW  
SO THAT PEOPLE WON'T  
CONNECT YOU WITH  
MRIGANKAVATI'S  
DISAPPEARANCE

YOU ARE  
RIGHT (I'LL JOIN)  
YOU LATER. TAKE  
CARE OF  
HER.

DON'T  
WORRY



MRIGANKAVATI'S DISAPPEARANCE CREATED A STIR THE NEXT MORNING.



SHE CAN'T GO FAR  
THE KING HAS  
ORDERED HIS  
SOLDIERS TO  
FIND HER.

DO YOU THINK SHE  
WILL BE ABLE TO ELUDE  
THEM? WHERE CAN  
SHE HIDE?

YOU ARE THE MAN  
WHO SAVED HER  
LIFE, AREN'T  
YOU?

YES, I CAME  
ON A VISIT TO SEE  
THE PLACE AND  
WAS HERE IN  
TIME TO BE  
OF SERVICE

I SHALL  
RETURN TO  
PATALIPUTRA,  
TOMORROW

COME BACK  
SOME  
TIME WE'LL  
TELL YOU  
WHAT  
HAPPENED

WINNATHA SET OUT TO JOIN HIS FRIENDS

EVERYONE THINKS  
I HAVE GONE TO  
ATALIPUTRA



BUT I'LL  
SOON BE  
WITH  
MRIGANKAVATI



HE MET HIS FRIENDS

WHAT IS THE  
MATTER?  
WHERE IS  
MR GANNAVAT?

SOME HORSE MEN  
ATTACKED US THEY  
TOOK OUR HORSES.

AND  
MRIGANKAVATI  
IS



GO AFTER  
THEM! RESCUE  
HER

WHAT  
ABOUT  
YOU?



DON'T WORRY  
ABOUT US?  
GO, HURRY!



SHRIDATTA SOON CAUGHT UP WITH THE HORSEMEN

AH! THERE GO THE  
VILLAINS.

STOP!  
STOP!

HE ATTACKED THEM.

MY DIVINE  
SWORD WILL  
NEVER FAIL  
ME

THOUGHT  
YOU WOULD  
NEVER COME

I'LL SET  
YOU FREE

ON THE RETURN JOURNEY—

NOW TO HELP MY FRIENDS.

THEY TRIED SO  
HARD TO  
PROTECT ME.



AFTER THEY HAD COVERED  
SOME DISTANCE—

OUR HORSE IS TIRED.  
WE MUST DISMOUNT  
AND LET HIM REST



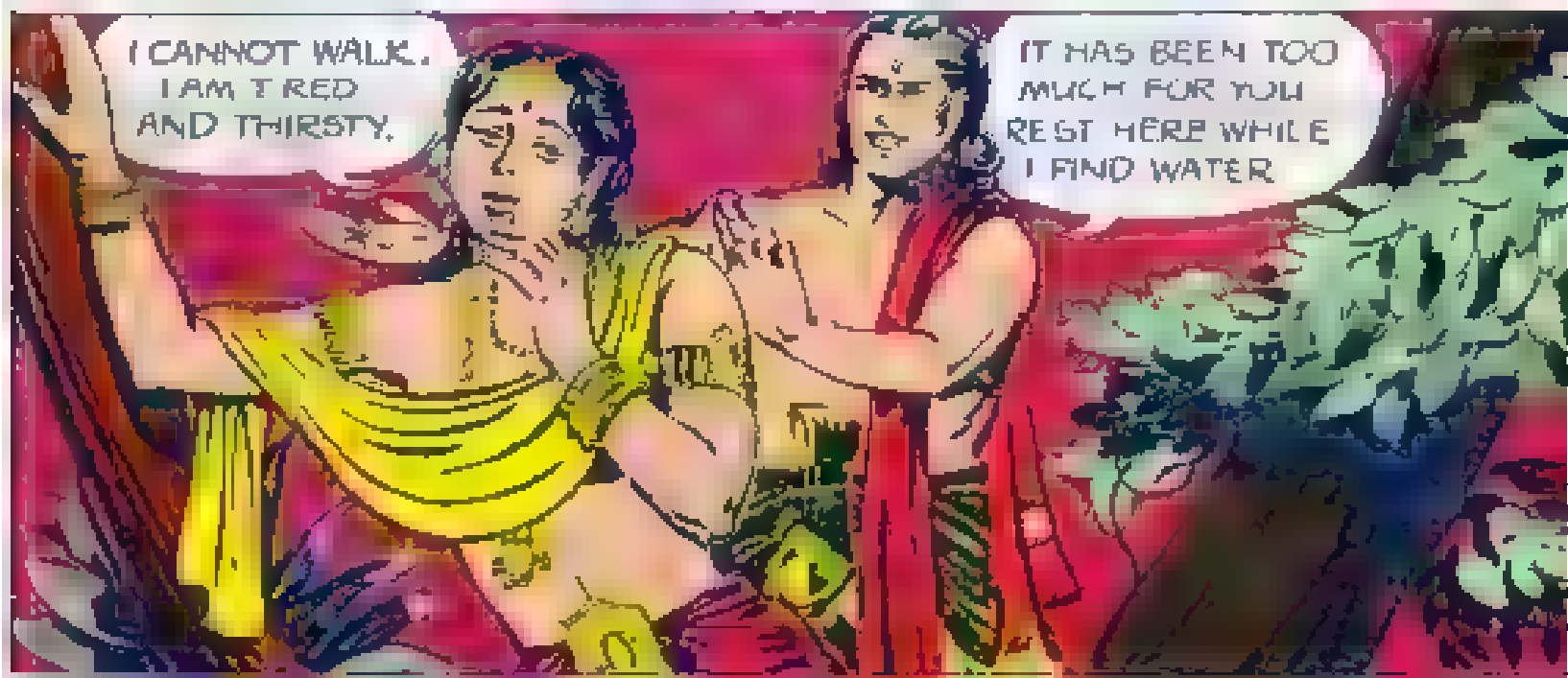
AS THEY DISMOUNTED, THE HORSE COLLAPSED.

POOR FELLOW! HE  
DID HIS BEST  
WE MUST WALK NOW



I CANNOT WALK.  
I AM TRED  
AND THIRSTY.

IT HAS BEEN TOO  
MUCH FOR YOU  
REST HERE WHILE  
I FIND WATER

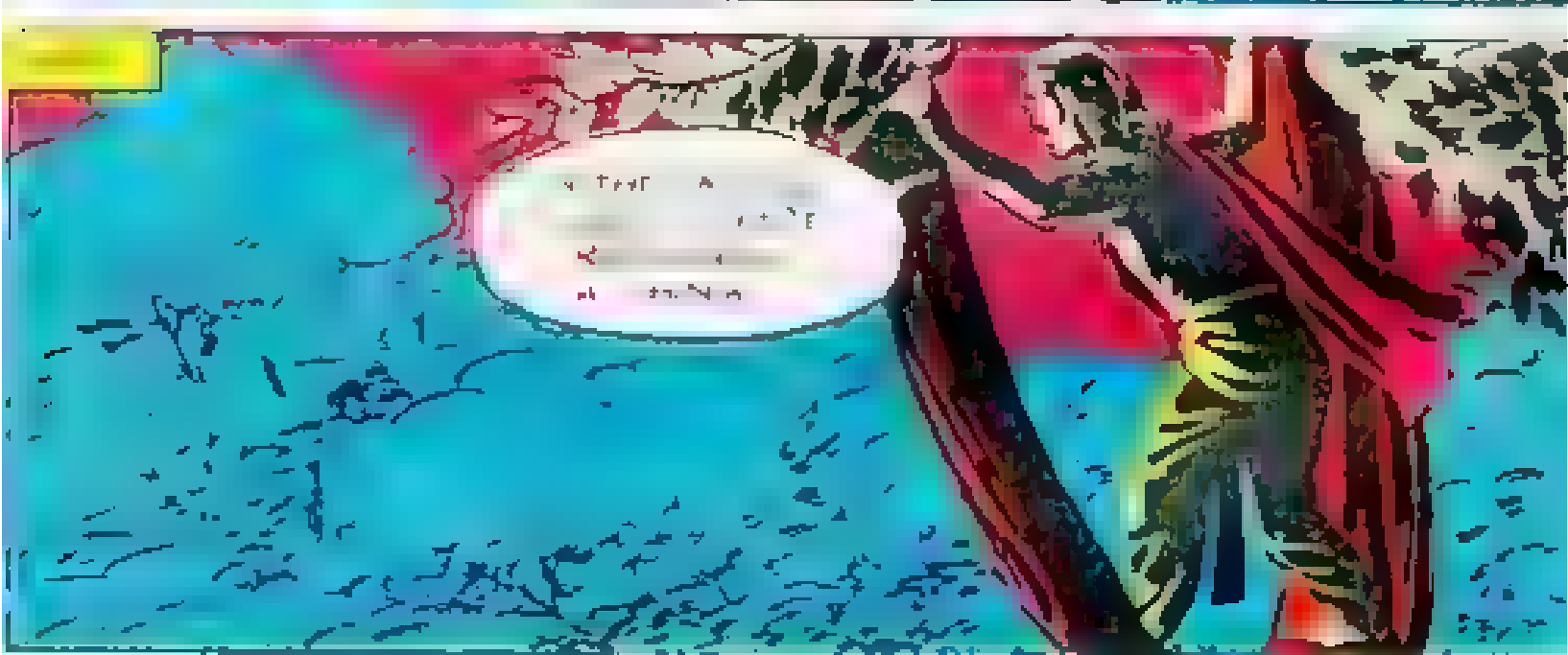




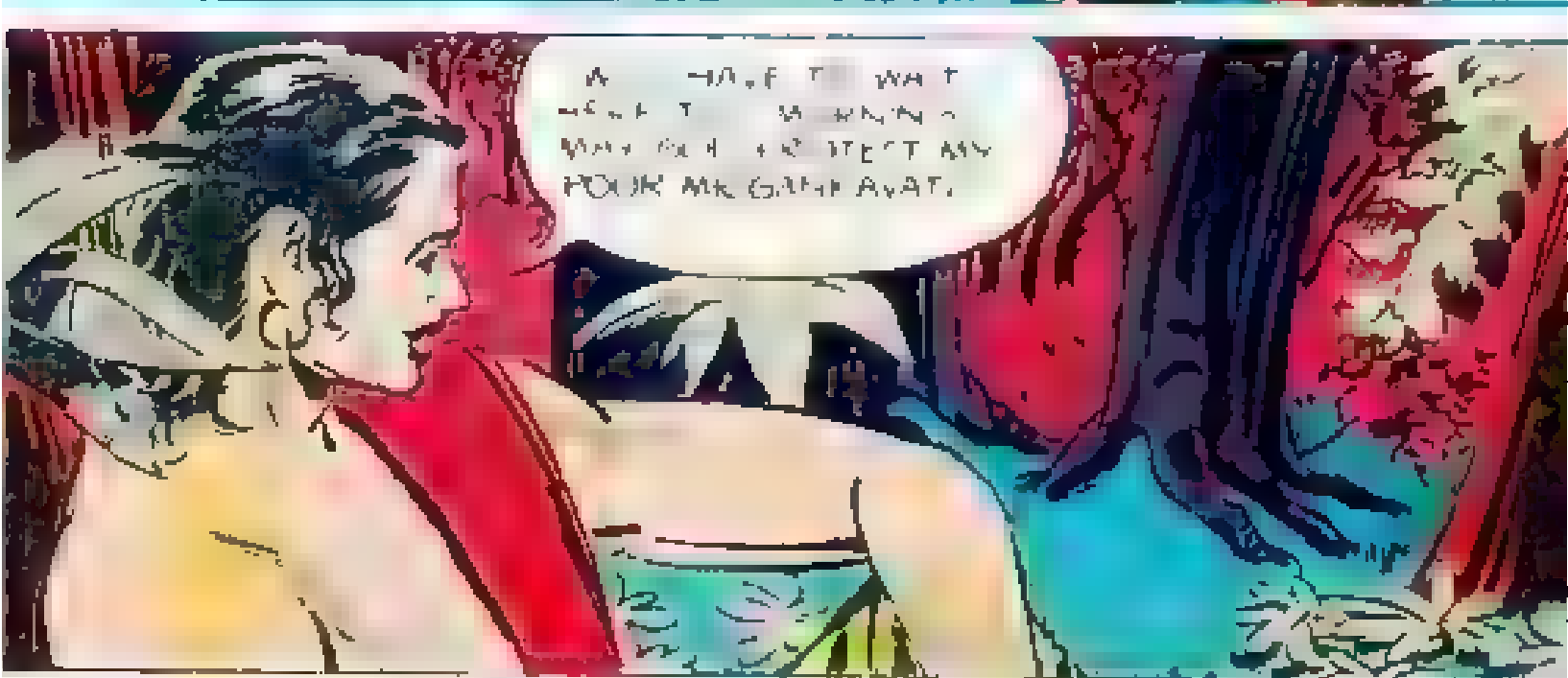




IT'S GETTING DARK  
I'LL CLIMB THIS  
TREE - MAYBE I CAN  
SEE HER FROM  
UP THERE



WHAT A  
BIG  
TREE  
IT IS



A HALF TON WEIGHT  
WENT TO MY SHOULDER  
AND I COULD FEEL MY  
FOUR ARMS GIVE AWAY.

MEANWHILE

WHAT COULD HAVE  
HAPPENED TO HIM?  
WHY ISN'T HE  
BACK?

IF SOMEONE  
COMES WHAT  
SHALL I DO?

WHAT IS THAT  
NOISE? IS IT  
A LION?

GRRK!  
KRRK!

IT WAS ONLY A HUNTER.


EEEEEE!

DON'T BE  
AFRAID,  
LADY!



GOOD SIR,  
PLEASE  
TAKE ME  
AWAY  
FROM  
HERE!


WHO ARE  
YOU? WHY  
ARE YOU  
HERE  
ALONE?



MY HUSBAND WENT TO  
FETCH WATER. HE MUST  
HAVE LOST HIS WAY.  
HE DIDN'T BACK  
YET

COME! I'LL TAKE YOU  
TO MATHURA. IT'S NOT  
FAR FROM HERE.

### LEAVING THE CITY OF MATHURA



THE PRIME MINISTER  
IS A GOOD MAN WE'LL  
GO TO HIS HOUSE  
THEY WILL TAKE  
CARE OF YOU

BUT HOW  
WILL MY  
SRIDATTI  
FIND ME?  
PERHAPS  
I SHOULDN'T  
HAVE  
COME  
AWAY






I'LL GO BACK TOMORROW  
AND TELL HIM YOU  
ARE HERE.


YOU ARE VERY  
KIND, SIR.

THE HUNTER LEFT MRIGANKAVATI IN  
THE PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE AND  
RETURNED TO THE FOREST



THIS IS WHERE I FOUND  
HER. I WILL WAIT  
HERE FOR  
SHRIDATTA.

SHRIDATTA TOO, WAS ON HIS  
WAY BACK.



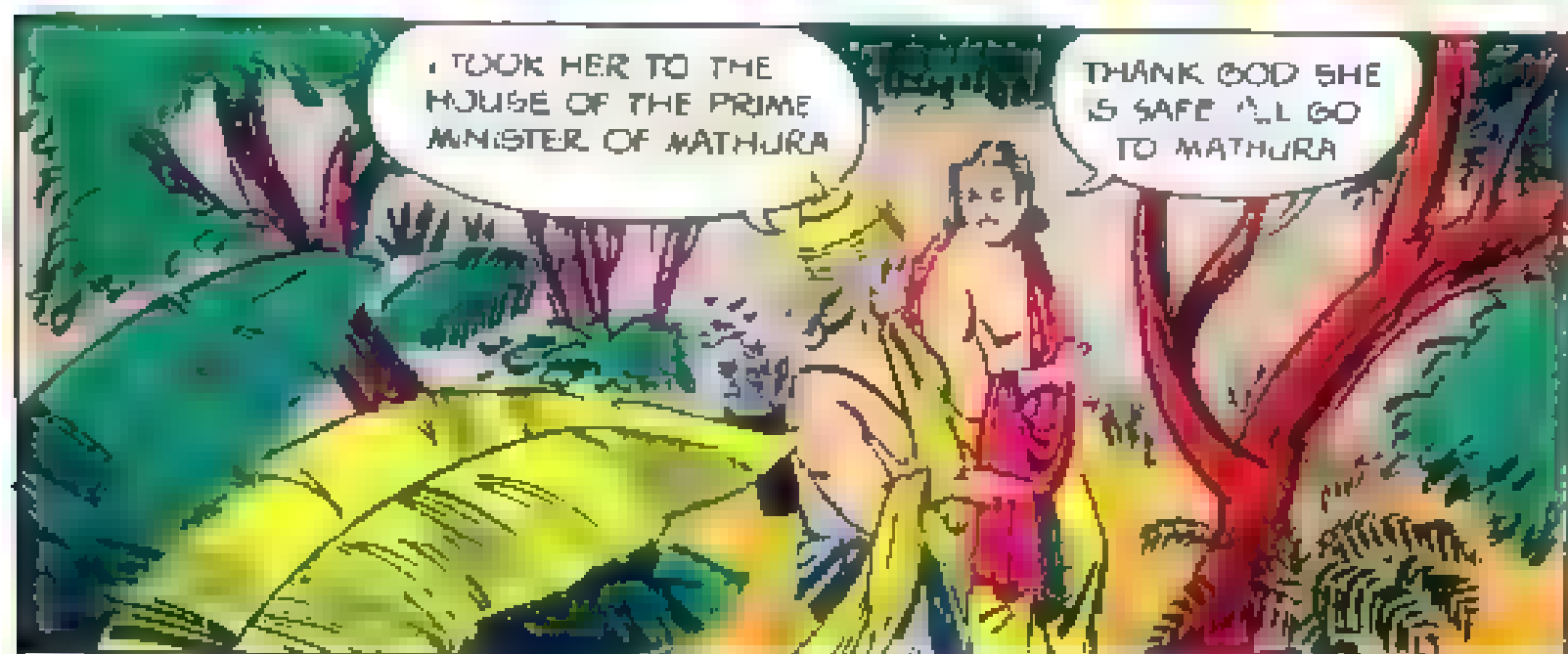
BY DAYLIGHT, THE  
WAY IS SO CLEAR.  
THIS IS THE PLACE

WHEN HE REACHED THE SPOT WHERE HE HAD LEFT MRIGANKAVATI -




ARE YOU  
SHRIDATTA?

I AM. WHO  
ARE YOU? HOW  
DO YOU KNOW  
MY NAME?



SUDDENLY —



SHRIDATTA!  
I WAS SO  
FRIGHTENED.  
WHATEVER  
HAPPENED  
TO YOU?

AT LAST,  
I HAVE  
FOUND YOU!

COME. I MUST TELL THE PRIME  
MINISTER AND HIS WIFE THAT  
YOU'VE RETURNED. THEY HAVE  
BEEN SO  
KIND TO  
ME.

THEY DESERVE MY  
LINDYING GRATITUDE  
AND RESPECT.

WHEN THEY REACHED THE PRIME MINISTER'S  
HOUSE —



MOTHER!  
THIS IS  
MY LORD.

I AM  
SHRIDATTA,  
THE SON OF  
KALANEMI OF  
PATALIPUTRA.



SHRIDATTA TOLD HIS UNCLE THE WHOLE STORY. WHEN HE HAD FINISHED—



SHRIDATTA AND MRIGANKAVATI WERE MARRIED. A FEW DAYS LATER—





MRIGANKAVATI WENT WITH HER UNCLE AND AUNT TO UJJAIN.

I AM THE PRIME MINISTER OF MATHURA. MRIGANKAVATI IS MY DAUGHTER-IN-LAW.

I AM SO RELIEVED TO SEE YOU. WHY DID YOU RUN AWAY?

FORGIVE ME, FATHER.

SHRIDATTA FOUND HIS FRIENDS AND BROUGHT THEM TO UJJAIN.

YOU MUST CHALLENGE VIKRAMASHAKTI.

WE'LL MAKE YOU THE KING OF PATALIPUTRA.

THE KING OF MATHURA WILL BE ON OUR SIDE. YOU CAN DEPEND ON THAT.

I'LL COLLECT AN ARMY AND WE WILL ATTACK PATALIPUTRA.

MRIGANKAVATI'S FATHER MADE A BOLD DECISION.

A TERRIBLE BATTLE WAS FOUGHT OUTSIDE PATALIPUTRA, IN WHICH...



...SHRIDATTA KILLED VIKRAMASHAKTI.



SHRIDATTA BECAME KING OF PATALIPUTRA AND REIGNED HAPPILY THERE WITH MRIGANKAVATI.



AMAR  
CHITRA  
KATHA

Give your child a gift he'll treasure  
forever—the gift of his own heritage  
in these specially designed

## BUMPER ISSUES

each containing three  
Amar Chitra Katha titles :



- |                                |   |                                       |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Tales of Hanuman            | 12. Devotees of Vishnu                  | 22. Tales of Revolutionaries          |
| 2. Tales of Birbal             | 13. Jataka tales                        | 23. Men who fought for Independence-I |
| 3. Tales from the Panchatantra | 14. Post Saints of North-India          | 24. Great sons of Bengal              |
| 4. Tales of Buddha             | 15. Ramakrishna Paramahansa & his tales | 25. Tales of Valiant Queens           |
| 5. Tales of the Mother Goddess | 16. Tales from the Mahabharata          | 26. Tales of Krishna                  |
| 6. The sons of Shiva           | 17. Tales of Gujarat                    | 27. Tales of Love and Devotion        |
| 7. Adventures of Krishna       | 18. Valiant kings of Ancient India      | 28. Exploits of Arjuna                |
| 8. Tales from the Hitopadesha  | 19. Folktales of Bengal                 | 29. Tales of Indra                    |
| 9. The Great Ranas of Mewar    | 20. Heroes of the Mahabharata           | 30. Buddhist Legends                  |
| 10. Tales of Honour            | 21. The three Gurus                     | 31. The Great Meghala-I               |
| 11. The sons of the Pandavas   |   | 32. The Great Meghala-II              |
|                                |   | 33. Heroes of Punjab                  |
|                                |   | 34. Tales of Sanjsever-I              |
|                                |   | 35. Legends of Orissa                 |



Distributed by  
**INDIA BOOK HOUSE**

Rs. 12/- each